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ABSTRACT

This document describes three different programs at three California Community Colleges, each of which has as its aim to improve their ability to serve an expanding and increasingly diverse student population. The programs are: (1) Project MATCH (Mentors Act To Change History) at the Los Angeles Community College District (LACCD); (2) The Disabled Student Programs and Services (DSPS) at Riverside Community College (RCC); and (3) The Listening Sessions at the City College of San Francisco (CCSF). Project MATCH was launched in 1991 to increase and diversify the faculty applicant pool in the LACCD. MATCH recruits and prepares individuals from historically underrepresented groups for careers as community college instructors. The retention rate for the program is more than 95%, and the annual cost of the program is about $57,000. RCC's DSPS has been at the leading edge of technology, and provides students with a range of adaptive technologies that can be accessed from labs on three college campuses. These technologies facilitate and enhance learning opportunities for students with physical disabilities, as well as assisting students with learning disabilities. CCSF's Listening Sessions invited local constituents to provide input on the future development of CCSF. Two hundred and fifty community leaders, public officials, educators, students, and others attended meetings with the Chancellor. (NB)

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We Could Do That!
A Guide to Diversity Practices in California Community Colleges

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We Could Do That! is a manual with tools and strategies that California community colleges can use to improve their ability to serve an expanding and increasingly diverse student population. Based on findings from a research project a City College of San Francisco, We Could Do That! was written to inform, inspire, and connect current and aspiring diversity practitioners. The manual begins with an introductory section explaining the history and purpose of City College's project, the methodology used by the research team, and the themes that emerged from the research. The second part of the manual features thirty case studies that describe promising and effective diversity projects.

The case studies give readers a quick impression of each project and are based on dozens of interviews with faculty, administrators, and staff members who have hands-on experience designing and implementing the diversity projects. Each case study contains a description of the project, evidence of its impact and success, and information about the cost, skills and staffing, environment, special conditions and project funding. There is advice from practitioners and a contact from each project who is willing—and likely even eager—to tell you more.

The intended audience includes decision-makers and diversity practitioners, and the information provided about each project was gathered with these users in mind. The goal of the project is to have decision-makers exclaim: "We could do that," after reviewing at least one case study in the collection. The content of each case study was gathered with the practitioner in mind and it is presented to answer questions such as, "How do you know it works?", "What does it take to get started?", and "Where did you get the money?". The range of projects covered is deliberately inclusive. They come with a range of price tags and include possibilities for large and small, urban and rural, and well-funded as well as financially stretched colleges.

The projects were identified through a research process that used multiple approaches, including a statewide survey of diversity practices and an analysis of state hiring data, to identify promising projects. This data was analyzed and a list of the most promising practices identified for additional research, which included extensive phone interviews with individuals involved in each project.

The three projects described below are representative of the range of projects in the manual, which are organized in three general categories: recruitment and hiring, internal climate, and external relations.

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Recruitment and Hiring

Project MATCH—Mentors Act To Change History—is a project at the Los Angeles Community College District. Project MATCH was launched in 1991 to increase and diversify the faculty applicant pool in the Los Angeles Community College District. MATCH recruits and

prepares individuals from historically underrepresented groups for careers as community college instructors. MATCH primarily targets candidates with master's degrees who have not yet taught at the community college level. MATCH also recruits a few professionals who do not hold a masters degree but who are good candidates for teaching vocational disciplines. For example, MATCH has trained former police officers to teach the course, "Administration of Justice."

Each year, about one hundred applications are submitted to the Office of Affirmative Action, and all applicants who meet minimum qualifications are invited for an interview. The internship program begins with a one-week summer institute on teaching methodology. Participants attend sessions every night from 6:00 PM to 10:00 PM on subjects like: how to teach in the classroom, different teaching methods, and different learning styles. Participants are matched with a mentor by the conclusion of the summer institute, and in the fall work with their assigned mentor to teach a three-unit class. Interns are encouraged to apply what they have learned at the summer Institute in the classroom with the support of their mentors. During the semester, the interns attend two Saturday seminars where they share their classroom experiences and develop job-seeking skills.

Funding problems interrupted the program between 1999 and 2000, but MATCH resumed operation in the summer of 2001. Currently, mentors and interns receive $800, though Project MATCH is trying to increase the stipend to $1,000. The outcome of this effort depends on funding and board approval.

MATCH has completed an evaluation for 1991 to 1996, so the program can document specific achievements. In 2001, forty out of one hundred applicants were selected for an interview. Of these, eighteen were chosen for the program with four alternates. The program also has an impressive record for program completion and placement of internship "graduates." Between 1991 and 1996, MATCH achieved retention rates of more than 95 percent. Of the first group of eighteen interns, twelve were offered assignments by colleges in the district. In the second group, when LACCD was reducing its budget, five interns were offered positions. One intern was offered a position in Texas, and CSU Northridge hired three interns. In the third group, two interns were offered administrative positions, one was offered a probationary position, and four interns were offered hourly assignments at local community colleges. Of the interns from 2001, five have been hired as hourly instructors at LACCD.

Interest in MATCH is strong, and intern evaluations are highly positive, with participants praising their mentors and the administration. Many interns comment that they are inspired both by the students and by their mentors. They also praise the summer Institute. Interns made the following suggestions for improving the program: provide interns with opportunities to observe master teachers in their fields; hold a Saturday seminar monthly instead of only twice a semester; require that all interns attend at least one board meeting; and extend the internship for a second semester without a stipend.

The annual cost is about $57,300. This includes the Project Match Coordinator ($8,500); a summer institute instructor ($3,500); mentor/intern stipends ($28,000); books and handbooks ($2,000); and food ($650). MATCH began when the LACCD Academic Senate and the LACCD Office of Affirmative Action Programs successfully applied for a grant to launch MATCH as a

state-funded diversity project. The project is now funded with district funds and augmented by staff diversity funds.

The Project MATCH Coordinator needs to be well connected to succeed in recruiting an adequate number of committed mentors. The program works best if top-level administrators strongly support it and urge their faculty to sponsor interns. A representative from the MATCH team emphasized, "getting mentors is more difficult than anything else." To effectively recruit mentors, the coordinator visits each of LACCD's nine campuses and meets with department chairs to request their participation. This is a tremendous amount of work, but over time LACCD has developed a dedicated steering committee and a core group of "repeat" mentors. As the key person who recruits and secures mentors, the Coordinator must be well connected and respected. The fact that the Project MATCH coordinator "knows everybody" has been essential to the program's success.

Internal Climate

The high tech center and adaptive technology services for students with disabilities at Riverside City College is an example of projects addressing the internal climate of a college In 1961, Riverside Community College launched the country's first community college program for the deaf. In 1975, the college added a component to serve students with physical disabilities. Five years later, the program expanded again by adding a program for students with learning disabilities. In 2001—forty years after the first group of twelve hearing-impaired students enrolled in vocational courses and one full-time staff member was assigned to serve as their counselor, interpreter/tutor and instructor in language-oriented classes—the Disabled Student Programs & Services (DSPS) had grown to include four offices on three campuses and a staff of twenty-three FTEs who provide a full range of services to more than fifteen hundred students a year.

Over the years, DSPS has been at the leading edge of technology and it provides disabled students with a full and continuously updated range of adaptive technologies that can be accessed from labs on three college campuses. As a first step in using these technologies, students can visit the high tech center where an adaptive technology specialist and a lab aide will work with them to develop an individual adaptive technologies plan. They can then work one-on-one with the high tech center staff to learn how to use the adaptive technologies that will increase their self-reliance and help them fully participate in standard college coursework and activities.

In the past, students had to continue to go to the high tech center to use the adaptive technologies. In 2001, however, the DSPS received grant money that enabled them to network the adaptive technologies throughout the entire campus. As a result, students can now access adaptive technologies from any lab. As an example, with the new licenses that were purchased as part of the networking project, fifty-two students in eight different labs can simultaneously use the program WYNN 3.1, a literacy program that enables the user to have course materials read to them via a screen reader.

In addition to facilitating and enhancing learning opportunities for students with physical disabilities, the adaptive technologies also assist individuals with learning disabilities. Beyond

this, ESL students, for example, may benefit from easy access to adaptive technologies that read text back to them and that introduce new and easy ways to use dictionaries and other references.

The program continues to expand with an estimated ten percent annual increase in the number of students served. The wide range of services provided is contributing to increase enrollment of disabled students at the district and college levels, particularly among visually and hearing impaired individuals. The district's strong DSPS Program has also resulted in articulation agreements with both high schools and baccalaureate institutions. RCCD thus serves as a bridge for students who graduate from a local K-12 school for the deaf and want to transfer to Gallaudet University in Washington DC, one of the country's foremost baccalaureate institutions for the hearing impaired.

The high tech center is helping students feel more self-sufficient. A forty-three-year-old blind student said that after working one-on-one with high tech center staff he had, for the first time in his life, begun to use a range of adaptive technologies that have made it much easier for him to learn and fully participate in classes.

The DSPS has strong leadership and a staff that works as a team. The coordinator is very skilled at "marketing," she has pursued and secured grant funding for the program, and she has positioned the DSPS as a resource that is highly valued by students and faculty alike. As part of its services to faculty, the DSPS has developed a *Faculty Handbook For Serving Students With Disabilities*. The DSPS also has in place a MIS program that tracks all services the program provides, including, for example, the name of each student receiving services, the classes they take, the class rooms they use and the accommodations they require. In addition to helping the DSPS organize and allocate resources and track students, the data base systems enables the program to document and communicate the importance of its services to the wider campus community. The DSPS enjoys strong support from faculty and administrators. The program's student centered approach and its efforts to serve as a resource for faculty have contributed to foster and continuously augment this positive relationship.

Funding for the center came mostly district and state funds. The networking was accomplished with a $53,000 Title V Grant from the state chancellor's office and the program also has a workability grant from the state department of rehabilitation.

External Relations

In 1998, the new Chancellor of CCSF, Dr. Philip R. Day, Jr., proposed and spearheaded eight Listening Sessions that invited local constituents to provide input on the future development of City College of San Francisco. The Listening Sessions took place over three months and provided opportunities for 250 community leaders, public officials, business and industry executives, educators, alumni, students and others panelists to address the question: What key directions should CCSF undertake in planning its future?

The panelists were organized into groups of six to eight individuals who shared a specific focus, for example, community organizations, workforce training and education leaders, or church community leaders. Each speaker made a five to seven minute presentation. To prepare

for the event, each panelist received a position paper that provided background information on the college—its current challenges and opportunities and a general vision for the future.

Before the first session, the chancellor distributed a memo reminding all college personnel that the purpose of a listening session is "to listen." This was the community's opportunity to speak to the college about local educational needs and priorities. Each session lasted an entire afternoon or evening. The chancellor opened and closed each session. Joining him on each listening panel were other college representatives including faculty, administrators and staff. At least one member of the CCSF Board of Trustees was present at each session.

The college invited 300 individuals to be panelists; 250 accepted, resulting in 35 hours of material with ideas and opinions from different constituent groups. Panelists were honored and excited to participate. Several mentioned that a large institution had never before asked for their input. The sessions resulted in a series of recommendations, many of which were very specific. The college transcribed each session and, after completing the sessions, translated the enormous amount of input and information into five to six major recommendations that were subsequently implemented. For example, the community recommended that the college conduct more outreach, particularly in minority and low-income neighborhoods. In response, CCSF created a new position for a dean of recruitment and outreach. Other input and feedback has enabled the college to incorporate community views into its decision-making and strategic planning process.

CCSF has nine campuses in San Francisco, and each campus dean played a key role in organizing the session that took place in his or her neighborhood. The campus deans and their staff members had to conduct research and network to identify local community, business, and public leaders to invite. One dean, who came to the college just before the planning process began, said: "It was a great way for me and the college to get to know the community better."

Overall, this is an inexpensive activity. The main requirement is time to organize and coordinate the event. The dean of the Office of Research, Planning, and Grants served as the Listening Session coordinator. He worked with campus deans to identify themes for each panel and to develop lists of panelists. For listening sessions that are at the scale of the CCSF events, the coordinator, campus deans, and other organizers will need to dedicate a significant amount of time to plan and coordinate the events. The CCSF Listening Session coordinator recommends that the planning activities begin at least four months prior to the event. One campus dean also recommended a four-to-five-month planning period.

The size and complexity of CCSF, with nine campuses located in neighborhoods that have different priorities and are concerned about different issues, made listening sessions especially time consuming and increased the amount of staff time needed for planning. At a smaller institution or at colleges that have one or few locations the planning process and required staff time should be less demanding. CCSF recommends serving refreshments at all sessions. After the listening sessions, the host college will need staff time to organize the transcripts and identify major themes in the material.

The college's top administrators should be involved in planning, with one person serving as coordinator and point person. All campus deans should be involved. One or more

administrative assistants are needed to track and follow-up on invitations, schedule panelists, etc. The project requires leadership from people who are skilled at networking. A great deal of political savvy among the arrangers is also recommended. This activity may be especially useful when a new president or chancellor takes office. Listening sessions can also provide valuable input to the strategic planning process

Listening sessions should only be attempted by colleges whose leadership is strongly in favor of the activity and willing to spend time getting involved in the planning and execution. The college CEO should introduce and be present throughout all sessions, thereby signaling to participants that the college leadership is interested in what they have to say.

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